Functioning of NICD

3906. SHRI ABANI ROY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Institute of Communicable Diseases has failed to provide timely diagnostic investigations during mysterious outbreaks;

(b) if so, whether Government have assessed the cause of failure of NICD during mysterious outbreaks;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government propose to review the functioning of NICD and to make it effective; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) to (e) National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) investigates disease outbreaks in different parts of the country round the year on the request of State Health Authorities or as per epidemiological requirement. In most situations, the methods are well established and containment measures are advocated to the concerned State Government authorities. However, in some situations when the disease presentation is complex, in-depth advanced laboratory investigations are often required which is time consuming. In reported disease outbreaks involving new emerging pathogens of communicable diseases or due to non-communicable agents, NICD seeks support from other national and international agencies to diagnose and control the outbreaks, if required. The preliminary reports submitted by NICD after each investigation are timely and based on the clinico-epidemiological and field observations, and diagnosed to the extent of taking immediate control measures which are communicated to the concerned State Governments immediately.

As per data available, NICD has responded immediately by investigating a total of 75 outbreaks or conducting health status assessments during 1997–2001 all over the country relating to different diseases on the request of various State Governments. During the year 2002 a total of 14 outbreaks have been investigated by NICD. As the Institute is performing its duties well, there is no proposal to review its functioning. However, certain plan schemes are envisaged during the Tenth Plan to further strengthen the activities of the Institute.